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Coming: New Effort to Topple Castro?

As Soviet troops pull out of missile-bristling Cuba—

Exile forces, long checked by U. S., may be getting a green light to harass Castro again.

The problem of Red Cuba, it's hinted, is taking a turn that could lead to a new crisis.

Signs are starting to appear that the U. S. soon may loosen its leash on anti-Castro Cuban refugee forces.

For over a year, the U. S. has made sure that exile groups would cause Cuba's Communist dictator no trouble. Hit-and-run raids, even if launched from points outside American territory, were barred. Britain, at U. S. urging, blocked refugees from using British Caribbean islands as staging points for slashes at Castro.

As a result, the flow of smuggled arms to anti-Communists inside Cuba was all but choked off. Sabotage devices were kept from Castro's enemies.

The fear has been that raids against Castro would stir Russia into action.

Now, however, the Soviets are pulling their remaining troops out of Cuba, leaving 24 bases stocked with antiaircraft missiles, as well as with other modern armament.

On April 30, Castro warned that, under his control, the missiles would be used against American reconnaissance planes. The U. S.—which has let it be known that such action would bring instant retaliation—reiterated that surveillance flights would continue.

Exiles to act? Meanwhile, more and more reports are getting into print about intensive activity by exile groups at points outside the U. S. Exiles are talking openly about resuming military operations.

The Johnson Administration isn't commenting. But on May 1, a Republican policy group headed by Dr. Milton S. Eisenhower urged a new U. S. policy toward Cuba—including the unleashing of refugee forces.

Some exile leaders—notably Manolo Ray, head of the anti-Castro Revolutionary Junta—have proclaimed that they will be inside Cuba, fighting, by May 20. That is Cuban Independence Day—62nd anniversary of the formation of the Cuban Republic.

Reports of new military training of Cuban exiles have been spreading for months. Training camps in Nicaragua and other Central American countries

have been mentioned with increasing frequency.

At the same time, leading political figures among the Cuban exiles have continued to seek support from fellow Latin Americans.

For example, Carlos Prío Socarrás, former President of Cuba, went to the Dominican Republic to ask aid. Luis Somoza, strong man of Nicaragua, flew to Miami to talk with Cuban exiles.

Manuel Artime, civilian chief of the brigade that fought at the Bay of Pigs in 1961, announced that he had set up headquarters in Central America. Prío and former Cuban Premier Antonio de Varona, a key organizer of exile units

Gutiérrez Menoyo, once a major in Castro's rebel army. Menoyo and Ray now have joined forces in a "loose coalition," refugee sources say.

Since February, a number of young Cubans have disappeared from the refugee colony in Miami. It wasn't a mass exodus, as in the weeks just before the Bay of Pigs. Those who vanished were, it seems, men with special skills in sabotage or guerrilla tactics.

During April, "crisis conferences" among exile leaders were stepped up—with hasty trips between Miami and Puerto Rico and secret destinations in Central America.

All of this comes at a time when the



Cuban exiles train for new operations against Castro. Indications are that refugee forces, shackled by U. S. for over a year, soon may resume raids and sabotage.

before the Bay of Pigs, talked with Nicaragua's President René Schick.

In recent months, newspapers in Miami have carried stories about the recruiting offices opened by veterans of the Bay of Pigs who had returned from commando training with the U. S. Army at Fort Benning, Ga., and Fort Jackson, S. C.

Not long ago, Artime flew to Miami from his Central American headquarters. In a fiery speech, he told refugees that a new war against Castro—"a long, hard war"—was being prepared.

Alpha 66, an exile organization which had made frequent forays into Cuba before the U. S. intervened, announced that it would soon resume infiltration. The combat leader of this group is Eloy

Russians are leaving Cuba, resentment against Castro's police-state terror tactics is said to be growing, and Castro's threats against the U. S. are pitched higher and higher.

Exile spokesmen say that, with the Russians gone, they see a chance to start a civil war in Cuba—a war in which they believe they could win support of some key officials in Castro's Government and whole units in the Red dictator's military forces.

It's a situation that appears to have all the elements of a new crisis over Red Cuba.